Shags are medium to large aquatic birds. Most are black or black above and white below. Blue legs, strong hooked beak, upright posture. Many have brightly colored facial skin when breeding. Sexes vary, in flight, wings short and tail spread, lack distinct bastard coverts or moulting marks. In Eight, legs vary so short and pale that they are not seen as in the water. But otherwise, braided, birders, waterbirds. Coastal and overseas. Breeding: All year.

Phalacrocorax

Plate 24

Other names: Paukaua, Blue shag (mahoe shag).

Geographical variation: Two subspecies: The Phalacrocorax varius varius breeds in the North Island, and the southern North Island, and the Blue Shag breeds around the South Island. These birds are found in Wellington Harbour. In the South Island, these birds nest in the coastal areas and in the waters around the Cotburns, from the Tongariro Mouth to the Motukere Mouth. These birds can be found in the Wellington Harbour area.

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101. SPOTTED SHAG Stictophasis caneva

A minimal impact on fish stocks, and few are taken. Spotted shags are often eaten, and those areas where demand is high often are taken, causing the population trends to be hard to study.